

Member of the House VA Committee Outraged at Cemetery Mismanagement, Urges Reports to Congress to Ensure Better Oversight

Congressman Represents One of New Jersey's Two National Cemeteries in Beverly

Burlington County – In a letter today, Congressman John Adler demanded regular reports to Congress over the recent mismanagement at Arlington National Cemetery. According to recent media reports, more than 200 graves at the Arlington Cemetery may be incorrectly identified. Congressman Adler, a member of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee who represents the nation's first tri-service Joint Base and over 66,000 veterans, wrote to request regular reports to Congress over the Arlington Cemetery reform process, and to ascertain how Congress can help make sure this travesty never occurs again.

"The brave men and women who died for our country should never be forgotten," Congressman John Adler, who represents one of two NJ national cemeteries, said. "It is outrageous to find that service members who died for our freedom are not guaranteed a peaceful resting place. Bureaucratic mismanagement is not a new concept in Washington, but the lapse at the Arlington National Cemetery is deeply offensive and needs to be corrected immediately."

Full text of the Congressman's letter is below:

The Honorable John McHugh
Secretary, United States Army
1400 Defense Pentagon
Washington DC 20301-1400

Dear Secretary McHugh:

I write to request more information concerning the recent travesty at the Arlington National Cemetery (Arlington Cemetery). A recent report from the Army details how over 200 graves may be incorrectly identified. I believe we agree that this is deeply offensive to our veterans and family members who lost a loved one in service to their country. Congress should take an active role in correcting this horrendous mistake, and I respectfully request regular reports to Congress so that our body may administer the proper amount of oversight.

I am pleased to hear that you have taken this issue head on. The Army has identified major deficiencies at the Cemetery including outdated recordkeeping, a lack of expert staff to oversee contracts and low staff morale. Appointing a former civilian commander of the Army Material Command may also make positive strides in correcting these unforgivable problems. We need to make sure we get it right this time, and Congress should be your partner in examining all the mistakes that were made. The memories of those who died for our country deserve our every consideration, and that is why I believe regular reports to Congress on this issue are critical.

Arlington National Cemetery is the final resting place for service members that paid the ultimate price for our freedom. As a nation, we must do all we can to preserve the sanctity of these hallowed grounds. I look forward to working together to resolve this problem and await your response on how we can work together to make sure this never happens again.

Sincerely,

John Adler
Member of Congress